

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

EA-09 FRB-01 INR-07 IO-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-06

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DEPT PASS LABOR FOR METCALF AND HEWITT; CEA FOR O'NEILL;
TREASURY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, OECD

SUBJECT: WORKING PARTY ON EMPLOYMENT MEETING,
OCT. 13-14

REF: OECD DOCUMENT MO/WP5(75)6

1. SUMMARY. WP ON EMPLOYMENT MET OCT. 13-14 AND AGREED THAT IT HAD FULFILLED ITS MANDATE; NO FURTHER MEETINGS ARE ANTICIPATED. WP AGREED TO RECOMMEND THAT ONLY THE ASSESSMENT OF SELECTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER MEASURES WILL BE OFFERED TO LAB MINS AND NOT THE INVENTORY. US DEL SUGGESTED THAT SECRETARIAT PREPARE MORE REALISTIC SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM POLICY OPTIONS TOGETHER WITH A MORE THOROUGH EVALUATION OF SAME. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM PAPERS BE COMBINED. AD HOC WP FOR MINISTERIAL WILL ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE. TURKISH DEL VIGOROUSLY ATTACKED INADEQUATE TREATMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN SECRETARIAT PAPER; WHILE UK DEL
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SUGGESTED THAT PROBLEMS OF SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF WORKERS

HAD BEEN TREATED EXTENSIVELY ELSEWHERE. TO RECONCILE TWO VIEWS, WP AGREED TO PRESENT MINISTERS WITH BACKGROUND PAPERS ON SPECIAL ISSUES, AND THAT MAIN DOCUMENTS WILL NOT MAKE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THESE ISSUES. JAMES METCALF, DOL, LED US DEL. END SUMMARY.

2. INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT OF SHORT TERM SELECTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER MEASURES (AGENDA ITEM 3).

LARGELY AS RESULT OF SWISS OPPOSITION, WP DECIDED NOT TO RECOMMEND PUBLICATION OF INVENTORY OF EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER MEASURES, NOR DISTRIBUTE SAME TO LABOR MINISTERS. SECRETARIAT WILL, HOWEVER, UPDATE INVENTORY PERIODICALLY AND OFFER ASSESSMENT AS A BACKGROUND PAPER FOR THE MINISTERIAL. US DEL EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS WITH DECISION TO PROVIDE MINISTERS WITH ASSESSMENT ONLY SINCE BOTH DOCUMENTS RELATE TO EACH OTHER. BASIS FOR SWISS OPPOSITION TO PUBLICATION WAS CONTENTION THAT THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE NOT ADOPTED POLICIES PRACTICED BY MANY OTHERS COULD BE SEEN IN UNFAVORABLE LIGHT. OTHER DELEGATES GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF SWISS COMMENTED ON IRRELEVANCE TO MINISTERS OF INVENTORY OF CURRENT AND PAST PRACTICES SINCE MINISTERS ARE CONCERNED WITH FUTURE (NEW) POLICIES.

3. IN GENERAL DEBATE ON CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION (MO/WP5(75)8), GERMAN AND US DELS DISAGREED ON INFLATIONARY IMPACT OF INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS. US DEL STATED THAT SUCH PAYMENTS IN US ARE OUTSTRIPPING RECEIPTS, WITH INFLATIONARY RAMIFICATIONS. ITALIAN DEL NOTED THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS "TIP OF UNDEREMPLOYMENT ICEBERG". US DEL WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED IN OBJECTING TO SECRETARIAT NOTION THAT EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY DEPENDED ON "SIGNIFICANT REFLATION". (SEE PARA 6I REF DOC.) CONTENTIOUS PARA WILL BE REVISED TO REFLECT US VIEWS. SPIRITED DEBATE FOLLOWED SWEDISH DEL'S ASSERTION THAT ANTI-INFLATION POLICIES OF FINANCE MINISTERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRENT RECESSION. HE CONCLUDED THAT MANPOWER POLICY SHOULD BE INTEGRAL PART RATHER THAN MARGINAL ASPECT OF DEMAND MANAGEMENT. MOST DELS CONCURRED

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WITH GERMAN DEL THAT GENERAL ECONOMIC POLICY IS BEYOND PROVINCE OF LABOR MINISTERS WHO, IN ANY CASE, COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DISAVOW THEIR GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES.

4. SHORT TERM PROBLEMS AND POLICIES, AGENDA ITEM 4 (MO/WP5(75)8).

US DEL STATED PROPOSALS SHOULD BE MORE REALISTIC AND THAT POLICY OPTIONS LISTED SHOULD BE MORE FULLY EVALUATED. HE OBSERVED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT US WOULD OBJECT TO SUBSIDIES FOR INEFFICIENT INDUSTRIES (PARA 27), AND THAT MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING NEEDS CANNOT BE PREDICTED WITH GREAT ACCURACY (PARA 28). SWISS DEL ALSO OPPOSED GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES AS "DIRIGISTE

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AND INTERVENTIONIST". AUSTRALIAN AND NETHERLANDS DELS STATED THAT UNEMPLOYMENT WAS NOT MAJOR ISSUE CONFRONTING THEIR GOVERNMENTS, BUT RATHER INFLATION AND THE SQUEEZE ON PROFITS. BOTH DELEGATES SUGGESTED THAT DOCUMENT ELABORATE ON THESE CONCERNS.

5. MEDIUM TERM PROSPECT AND POLICIES, AGENDA ITEM 5.

US DEL OBSERVED THAT THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM PAPERS WERE REPETITIVE SINCE BOTH ADDRESSED THE SAME ISSUES AND POLICY RESPONSES THERETO. HE THUS RECOMMENDED THAT

SECRETARIAT COMBINE THE TWO DOCUMENTS AND PRESENT SAME TO NOVEMBER AD HOC WP FOR THE MINISTERIAL. US DEL SUGGESTION RECEIVED WIDE SUPPORT EXCEPT FROM SWISS AND UK DELS. SWISS ARGUED THAT SECRETARIAT HAD INSUFFICIENT TIME TO COMBINE PAPERS BEFORE WP MEETING, AND UK MAINTAINED THAT CURRENT PRACTICES AND FUTURE POLICIES MUST BE DISCUSSED SEPARATELY; THEREFORE SEPARATE DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED. DIRECTORATE HEAD GASS AGREED THAT TIME IS A PROBLEM AND SUGGESTED THAT QUESTION BE DISCUSSED BY UNCLASSIFIED

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AD HOC WP.

6. SOCIAL EQUITY IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY. MO/WP5(75)7.

LIVELY DEBATE FOLLOWED THE UK DEL'S SUGGESTION TO DELETE OR CONDENSE PART IV OF REF DOC WHICH DISCUSSES SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND OLDER WORKERS. HE CONTENDED THAT SINCE THESE ISSUES HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN OTHER FORA "AD NAUSEAM", MINISTERS SHOULD FOCUS ON BROAD ISSUES AND DEAL IN GENERAL WAY WITH SPECIAL INTEREST PROBLEMS. TURKISH DEL COUNTERED THAT "IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO DISCUSS EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER WITHOUT ADDRESSING THESE SPECIAL ISSUES...INCLUDING MIGRANTS". US SUPPORTED UK CONTENTION THAT AGENDA WAS GETTING AWAY FROM BROADER ISSUES, AND IN FURTHERANCE OF MORE EFFECTIVE AGENDA, WE AGREED THAT PART IV COULD BE SHORTENED. US WAS PREPARED TO SEE OUR OWN TOP CONCERNS WITH MINORITY GROUPS LEFT OUT OF PART IV PROVIDED THAT LABOR EXPORTING COUNTRIES AGREE TO DROP ISSUE OF MIGRANT WORKERS. US DEL CONCLUDED THAT IF MIGRANTS ARE INCLUDED, THEN ENTIRE QUESTION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION MUST ALSO BE DEALT WITH. CHAIR THEN PROPOSED THAT A REVISED CHAPTER WILL NOT SUGGEST SOLUTIONS, BUT THAT THESE ISSUES BE EXPLORED ADEQUATELY IN BACKGROUND PAPERS.

7. WP DID NOT DISCUSS AGENDA ITEM 6: "STRUCTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT".

8. PREPARATION OF FUTURE WORK, AGENDA ITEM 7.

IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY GASS, CHAIR STATED "WE HAVE FULFILLED OUR MANDATE; THERE WILL BE NO OTHER MEETINGS OF THIS WP". COMMENTING ON STATE OF PLAY OF PREPARATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL, GASS MENTIONED THAT QUESTION OF PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WITH BIAC AND TUAC HAD BEEN RAISED WITH SEC GEN VAN LENNEP. GASS NOTED THAT SINCE

THE OECD IS NOT A TRIPARTITE ORGANIZATION, BIAC-TUAC
PARTICIPATION IN THE MINISTERIAL WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION;
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HOWEVER, GASS INVITED MEMBER COUNTRIES TO CONSIDER
LEVEL AND DESIRABILITY OF SUCH CONSULTATIONS.
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